



Department Updates

Veterans Service Office

Scott Bachowski Veterans Service Officer

We were in Kenosha the first week of April for our semi-annual training conference. These conferences are held twice per year as continuing education to maintain accreditation with multiple Veterans Service Organizations for us and other CVSOs and their staff, and it is crucial to the success of VSOs offices that operate in all 72 counties in Wisconsin.

More than 100 CVSOs and staff attended the week-long event. This was the first time Kenosha has hosted the conference in the CVSO Association's history.

Our opening ceremony kicked off with the posting of the colors by the Kenosha Area Vietnam veterans and a big welcome from Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser who emphasized the important role of the CVSO serving veterans and their dependents at the county level.

The ceremony also included Duane Honeycutt, the Director of the Veterans Administration Milwaukee Regional Office, who works closely with the CVSOs in the state. He thanked us for the on-going partnership in assisting veterans with VA claims. There was also a Vietnam Commemoration Ceremony where Mr.

Honeycutt presented each Vietnam era CVSO with a pin and certificate in appreciation for their service.

All the major players in the VA benefit delivery business in Wisconsin were in attendance. They included representatives from the VA Milwaukee Regional Offices of Compensation, Pension, and Information/Technology; VA Medical Center representatives from Milwaukee, Madison, Tomah, and Minneapolis; Judge Piontek, Veterans Treatment Court; Center for Veterans Issues; WI Assembly Minority Leader Peter Barca and many more. One presenter, Katrina Eagle from Veterans Law Office, flew in from San Diego, CA to train us on VA law and appeals.

Our semi-annual training has paid off through the years as CVSOs have been instrumental in increasing VA benefits 354%, from total benefits in 2002 of \$847 million to \$2.6 billion in 2014. County Veterans Service Offices are responsible for 95% of the 9,042 claims currently pending at the VA Regional Office in Milwaukee submitting over 25,000 claims to the VA each year.

Bill Rosenau, our CVSO Association President, stated that

the CVSOs and the CVSO Association can expect two huge statistical "whale curves" of veterans and their dependents, stemming from the longest period of war in our nation's history, to occur in the next 20 years. "We are their trained professional advocates at the local level ready to assist our fellow veterans. The local access model is an established delivery system that works, is cost efficient, and provides professional advice, assistance and veteran-focused representation at the county level" Rosenau said.

Our CVSO Association of Wisconsin stands ready to work with any agency or stakeholder willing to passionately assist veterans and their families at the local level in Wisconsin for the incredible sacrifices they have made to our country and state!

County Board Meetings

- May 16th - 7:00 p.m.
 - June 20th - 7:00 p.m.
 - July 18th - 7:00 p.m.
 - August 15th - 7:00 p.m.
 - September 19th - 7:00 p.m.
 - October 17th - 7:00 p.m.
 - November 7th - 6:00 p.m.
 - November 15th - 9:00 a.m.
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Forestry

John Cisek, Forest Administrator

Timber Sale Activity

A shortened logging season left the two active sales this winter partially completed.

- Turtle Cr. II (Tract 3-2013 / # 350) located in the Township of Turtle Lake, covers 243 acres and contains 441 MBF (thousand board feet) of hardwood and pine sawtimber and 1020 cords of oak, hardwood and aspen cordwood. Tri-State Lumber and Land is the contract holder. Approximately 95 % of the sale was completed before spring break-up. The sale will be re-started as conditions permit.
- Shiner Lake (Tract # 5-2014 / # 355) located in the Township of Cedar Lake, covers 92 acres

and contains 144.51 MBF of hardwood and pine sawtimber and 1090 cords of hardwood and softwood cordwood. Approximately 20 % of this sale was completed. Much of the wood harvested is piled on the sale. Road improvement (gravel) will be done to allow summer access to haul.

Lumbering Hall of Fame

- The Lumbering Hall of Fame has requested the placement of a second fishing pier (somewhat smaller than the first). Leftover monies from the initial grant will be used along with a donation from the local lake association.

Chetek Fire Tower Sale

- Barron County's 2016 County Conservation Grant has been approved for use on the Chetek

Fire Tower scarification project.

Wild Rivers Trail

- Under the direction of the Forestry Dept. and Dave Moin; Barron County Trail Co-ordinator the clearing project on the Wild Rivers took place in April. Ten feet either side of the trail was cleared of merchantable timber (mostly aspen) and hazard trees.

Timber Sale Set-up

- Timber marking has started on a number of stands on the county forest. County surveyor Mark Netterlund is establishing property lines where necessary. Maintenance Dept. is painting boundary lines. DNR staff is carrying out the marking of trees for harvest.

Please contact our office for more information or questions.

Highway Department

Mark Servi, Highway Commissioner

Barron County has been selected by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as one of two pilot counties nationally to work with the US Road Assessment Program (usRAP) to perform a detailed safety review all of our county highways. We will be working with FHWA's consultant, MRIGlobal, on this project. The review is at a detail level of every 300-foot for our entire 293 mile highway system. There will be several different forms of electronic information that they will include in their review, from potentially Google Maps to our WISLR Pavement Rating inputs. The end result of this review will be a System Wide Safety Improvement Plan. Why is this important you may ask? The new Federal Transportation Funding Plan, the FAST ACT, has a safety focus and requires that there be safety plans in place to access certain areas

of the funding. So we should be among the first Departments on the local level nationally to develop this plan and use it to potentially gain access to funding, resulting in a safer county highway system for the users.

Construction season is upon us again. Work has started on the last section of the CTH P project near the CTH P / CTH D intersection. This involves reconstruction of this last section of the project. We will then pave the reconstructed area, and later in the year we will place the final layer of asphalt over the entire 8 mile project length. Work will be beginning on CTH SS north of Chetek in late May. This is a pavement replacement project that completes the pavement replacement from Cameron to Chetek.

Construction of the \$5.5 Million CTH A project is scheduled to begin on May 16th. This will involve closing

CTH A and completely reconstructing it to meet the standards required for its current and future use. The project is being performed in 3 stages. Details of the project will be posted on the County Webpage. Construction is scheduled to be completed in the fall. The result is a much improved roadway, and the completion of a project that has been in the planning stages of design since 2004.

Please be aware of Highway Work Zones as you travel. It is the season of the orange barrel and the flashing lights. If you come across a work zone, please focus your attention on driving safely so you may get through the zone without incident. Help us protect the men and women that work every day to keep the transportation system in good repair.

Human Resources

Rachael Richie, HR Director

<u>New/Replacement Positions</u>				
<u>Position Title</u>	<u>Office/Department</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Date Filled</u>	<u>New/Replacement</u>
Civilian Correction Officer	Sheriff	Marco Valadez Weston Schwartz	4/15/16	Replacement
Behavioral Health Services Program Manager	Health & Human Services	Ann Hay	6/6/16	Replacement
Public Health Sanitarian	Health & Human Services	MacKenzie Cole	5/31/16	Replacement
Public Health Nurse	Health & Human Services	Recruiting		Replacement

UW Extension

Kathy Splett
WNEP Coordinator / Educator

The Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) of UW-Extension has had a busy first half a year of nutrition education events between Andrea Gardner, WNEP Educator, and Kathy Splett, WNEP Coordinator/Educator.

Nutrition education is almost complete for this year within 5 county schools (Turtle Lake, Cumberland,

Rice Lake, Barron, Chetek) in the 1st, 3rd, and 4/5th grades. We discuss with the students what nutrition is, the importance of nutrition, the guidelines of MyPlate, and how eating healthy affects their life now and in the future. They have had the opportunity to sample fruits and vegetables that they may have never had.

Nutrition education with adults have and will take place at Women, Infant, Children (WIC) Clinics;

Homeless Shelters; Group Homes; Parent meetings; and Food Pantries. Educational topics covered include: nutrition health topics, food safety, family meals and food resource management.

Fiscal Year 17 budget and education event contract planning has been determined and is in the process of approval for Barron and Polk counties.

Sheriff's Department

Chris Fitzgerald
Sheriff

Law enforcement officers are routinely called upon to perform miracles and to do the impossible. At the scene of an automobile accident, they are expected to perform as doctors, paramedics, and traffic engineers. Responding to a domestic disturbance they are expected to perform as counselors and therapists, as well as keepers of the

peace. Dealing with juveniles, they are expected to perform as parents, teachers, and sociologists. In the courtroom they are expected to be lawyers. If they do not perform with excellence every day, they risk complaints from the public, suits from disgruntled defendants, investigations by the news media, and even death when a life-threatening situation are not handled properly. Nevertheless, each day the men and women in law en-

forcement in Barron County from dispatchers, jailers and patrol officers put on their uniform to serve the citizens of Barron County with honor and pride. So during Law Enforcement Appreciation week (May 15-20) as we take time to remember all the fallen law enforcement officers who have given the ultimate sacrifice and also please join me in Thanking all law enforcement in Barron County for the job they do each day.